

## **NEIGHBORHOOD NETWORKS**

**Moderator: Michele Higgs-Johnson**  
**April 19, 2005**  
**3:00 p.m. EST**

**Operator:** Good day everyone, and welcome to this Neighborhood Networks conference call.

This conference is being recorded.

And now at this time, I'd like to turn the conference over to Ms. Michele Higgs-Johnson. Ms. Higgs-Johnson, please go ahead.

**Michele Higgs-Johnson:** All right. Thank you, Matt. Good afternoon everyone, and welcome to the Neighborhood Networks' April conference call. The topic for today's call is Identifying Labor Market Trends in Your Community.

My name is Michele Higgs-Johnson and I am one of the technical assistance coordinators working with you to address the technical assistance needs of the various Neighborhood Networks around this country.

Before I introduce our speakers for this afternoon, I want to remind the Multifamily Neighborhood Networks centers that the Strategic Tracking and Reporting Tool, also known as the S.T.A.R.T. business plan contains resource materials that will help you to survey your resident's interest and needs, as well to assess their skill levels, and education levels, that will allow you to customize the kinds of programs you want to offer to fit their needs. The resident demographic surveys that

are available in the S.T.A.R.T. business plan are key to shaping the programs that you offer to your community, whether you're dealing with workforce development, job readiness or entry level skills, re-entry in the workforce, job search or job retention, or training that will move residents to a level of employability, working with the GED, or ESL, or computer literacy. The S.T.A.R.T. business tool will help you assess the needs of your residents on your property, and help you determine where to start. These assessments are vital when assisting residents in their pursuit of employment or in helping them embark on a career path.

If you have questions about the S.T.A.R.T. business plans, resident surveys, internal marketing plans, or general questions pertaining to Neighborhood Networks, please call the toll free Neighborhood Networks information line at (888) 312-2743. You can also visit the Neighborhood Networks Web site at [www.NeighborhoodNetworks.org](http://www.NeighborhoodNetworks.org). Again, the information line is (888) 312-2743. And the Web site is [www.NeighborhoodNetworks.org](http://www.NeighborhoodNetworks.org).

I also want to remind listeners that an audio and verbatim transcript of this call will be made available on the Neighborhood Networks Web site in about 2-weeks.

Now the good news, I want to congratulate the Neighborhood – the HUD Coordinators with Neighborhood Networks who will be receiving onsite technical assistance this year. We've already completed two wonderful meetings in South Dakota with Erik Amundson and in Connecticut with Suzanne Baran). And as we speak, staff is onsite with Dawn Manley in Indiana. And coming up next week is a meeting with Pamela Breitnbach in New Jersey. There will be 20 visits in all. And we look forward to working with Rita Nunweiler in Minnesota; Diana Mann in California; Mari Adams in Massachusetts, Christian Stearns and Tony Haggerty in Wyoming; Carolyn Davis in Tennessee; Mary Frances Byrd in Texas; Debra Gaddy in Florida; Jennie Chambers-Jones in Mississippi; Renee Kiel in Oklahoma; Peggy Spaner in New York; Elaine Bennett in South Carolina; Gregory Yates in Nebraska; Gloria Garcia in New Mexico; William Miecuna in New York; Pamela Wildfong in Michigan; and Pamela Dodge in Iowa.

During these meetings, Neighborhood Networks TA staff will assist the HUD Coordinators in seeking out opportunities for workforce development, helping with outreach to property owners, encouraging the development of new centers, and providing training on the S.T.A.R.T. business tool, often going to a center or two to provide assistance to center staff and entering the S.T.A.R.T. information.

Now addressing our topic; this afternoon, our intent is to help you get a handle on the labor market trends that influence the every shifting development in the workforce. As the mission of Neighborhood Networks is to help residents strengthen their skills, so that they are ready to take their place in the workforce, it is important to know what that workforce looks like for them. It is important to know that Neighborhood Networks centers are helping residents get the training they need, training that will outfit them to fully participate in the work world in a meaningful way, training that truly prepares them and empowers them to participate in the job market that exists for them. This means knowing that the world is ready to take in another computer literate receptionist, when there are computer literate residents ready for jobs.

In a success story from the Neighborhood Networks Web site, and I remind you that that Web site can be accessed by going to [www.NeighborhoodNetworks.org](http://www.NeighborhoodNetworks.org), Goodman Plaza, a center in Shreveport, Louisiana, had expanded its career center last year to add on to the range of services that the center offered to the community. Classes were being tailored to meet the needs of participants, whether they were getting help to pursue a high school diploma or GED, find a job or seek career training. At the time of the center's open house, Allyneta Beck the computer technology instructor remarked, "With the help of this new center, residents will move into higher level jobs, and have an opportunity to further their education and increase their skills." It sounds encouraging, right?

Well listen to this, when I spoke with Ms. Beck just recently, she reported that this year one student had gotten his GED, and gone on to enroll in a 2-year college. And further, that the GED program had grown from offering classes just 2-days a week, to offering classes 5-days a week to accommodate demand. We want to give hardy congratulations to Goodman Plaza and to that student who is on his way. The services we offer with Neighborhood Networks work. Keep up the good work, all of you!

Today, we have two women who are well versed in the ways of the labor market. It has been a pleasure and an education speaking with them in preparation for this presentation, and I'm going to introduce them to you right now.

First, we have Ms. Karen Czarnecki. Ms. Czarnecki is a senior advisor to Secretary of Labor (Ellen Cho) and Director of the US Department of Labor's 21<sup>st</sup> Century Workforce office. The 21<sup>st</sup> Century Workforce office is charged with the mission of addressing the challenges of improving America's competitiveness in this dynamic economy. Prior to joining labor, Ms. Czarnecki was director of the Civil, Justice, and Health and Human services Task Forces, at the American Legislative Exchange Council, a bipartisan, nonprofit, membership association of state legislators.

We'll also be joined by Ms. Michelyn Burke-Lee who is a Manpower Analyst in the area of Labor Market and Work Force Information with the US Department of Labor's Employment and Training administration in Washington, DC. She came to the department from Tulane University where she was Assistant Director of the non-custodial competitive welfare to work program for the city of New Orleans. She has also worked on the local level as a workforce program planner and analyst in Washington DC and Arlington, Virginia. I know these women have a lot of good information for you. So I'm going to stop talking, and let them speak. Michelyn, will you begin for us please?

**Michelyn Burke-Lee:** OK. Well thank you, Michele.

**Michele Higgs-Johnson:** OK.

**Michelyn Burke-Lee:** Hello, everyone. Michele, before I begin, did you have any type of time limits or constraints we need to keep in mind.

**Michele Higgs-Johnson:** I'd like to keep remarks to about 10 to 15 minutes.

**Michelyn Burke-Lee:** Not a problem.

**Michele Higgs-Johnson:** I know we talked about it could go on.

**Michelyn Burke-Lee:** Yes, I will try to definitely limit myself. Good afternoon, everyone. Again this is Michelyn Burke-Lee. And I'm with the United States Employment Service, America's Labor Market Information System. And I work in the area of LMI. Basically Michele contacted me and asked me to speak to you all this afternoon. And I'm basically going to follow the bullets that she sent out. And I just have a few points to address each one, and I'll start with the first one in terms of where and how to research current labor market trends.

As Michele mentioned before, I came to Labor, I did work on the local level, and I'm very much familiar with the population that I am sure that you're working with out in the communities. I have worked with food stamp employment and training. I've worked with jobs, which was pre-welfare reform, employment and training, again, Welfare to Work, I had two Refugee Resettlement programs and one HUD funded program under the Community Development Employment and Training program.

So when I talk about how and where to research labor market information, I am going to give you suggestions, again, with your population in mind. Basically, when you're looking for labor market

information, I'm going to pretty much tell you it is everywhere. And you just have to kind of hone on into whom you're speaking with, and what kind of information you can possibly pick up from them. Particularly on the local level, if you just watch the news, and are pretty much aware of a lot of the activities, your business and economic activities are going on in the community, can give you a lot of information in terms of current labor market opportunities.

Now every state does receive funding for labor market information. Each state has what we call a state LMI shop. And a state LMI shop basically provides support to the residents of the state in addition to our One-Stop centers, the workforce development center, in terms of providing information of use to employers, and job seekers, and economic developers. Again, in terms of mentioning employers locally, as you go out and you're developing job opportunities for your people, talk to employers about their needs, about their current needs, and also about their future skill needs, what they see upcoming in the next year, a couple of years or so because time is really very – excuse me – relative. What we think of in the future, as the future, could be very, very current for an employer. So again, it's good to know about their needs. And again, that is a form of labor market information that most people maybe would not think of. They think more of their usual terms.

**Michele Higgs-Johnson:** Michelyn, may I break in for a second?

**Michelyn Burke-Lee:** Sure.

**Michele Higgs-Johnson:** I know you're trying to squeeze all of this in, but you're talking kind of fast.

**Michelyn Burke-Lee:** OK.

**Michele Higgs-Johnson:** Slow down a little bit, we won't cut you off.

**Michelyn Burke-Lee:** OK.

**Michele Higgs-Johnson:** Thanks.

**Michelyn Burke-Lee:** Well globally, I have sent out a link to a product that we developed here at ETA called an Environmental Scan. And what we did with the Environmental Scan is a compilation of different Web sites and resources that were available that provide labor market information.

Now this compilation includes federal sources, non-federal sources, private sector sources and nonprofit sources. And again, we were just trying to see what was already out there, and accessible to people who are looking for labor market information. As I mentioned a couple of minutes ago, each state does receive funding for their LMI shops and it's joint funding between us here at ETA, and the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS). The difference in terms of the labor market information that we're interested in is that BLS has more of a national level global picture. So when you hear about your national unemployment figures, that's where that's coming from. Whereas, ETA is looking more on terms – in terms of local level needs. And that's why I was mentioning that when you go out into the community, to be sure that you speak with employers, and businesses, as to what their current skill requirements are, and their future skill requirements.

Another resource locally, of course, would be your local One-Stop career center. And within the career center would be what we call a resource library, which will also have various labor market resources. This could be a combination of different Web sites that are accessible via computer. Or some of your different brochures, bulletins, and other information that is published and disseminated by the state. Another source that you might be interested in would be your Chamber of Commerce, or your local economic development agency. They would also be a very good source for our labor market information. And when I'm referring to labor market information,

I'm really speaking of anything that will help your client or participant fit. And I'm using that "fit" in quotations into the labor – the local job market, basically looking at the skills, and their desires what it is they want to do. And then, finding that information that they would need to help them fit or be able to secure viable employment in your area.

Another resource would be your local community college, or any research universities that you might have in your area, or also located within your state. Generally, your research universities are the ones that undertake the studies in terms of your business and economic condition, and again that's another possible option. The ones I've just mentioned are basically your state, sub state and local area sources. In terms of national level information, again, the Scan, which Michele will send out the link to you all, is a good resource. Again, it's not completely inclusive, but it does have about 38 different links to a variety of resources and 80 pages worth of guidance and direction that you might find helpful. In addition, again, there's BLS, the Bureau of Labor Statistics, and of course, they have their own Web site, [www.BLS.gov](http://www.BLS.gov). And I mention them specifically because they issue what is called the Occupational Outlook Handbook. And also, they also publish industry career guides on an annual basis, that will also provide a lot of general, national level-based labor market information.

In terms of how to research LMI, that's going to really vary. And that's going to be dependent upon, again, the need of your client or participant as to what you're looking for specifically. And again, some of the variables could be the gender, the age of the participant, specific wages, or a wage range that they're looking to obtain, if you're looking for projections, which are more of your long-term openings or forecasts, which are more of your shorter term, 2-years or less, in terms of occupational openings. Whether you're looking for the declining industries, a lot of that will really determine how you're going to research it.

Most of the things I've mentioned are pretty much canned types of reports – excuse me –that they should have available. So that type of information should be easily accessible through the

state's Web site. If you're looking for something in a little bit more detail, for example, if you're looking for industries that are declining, industries that seem to have a lot of turnover, or industries that – or, excuse me, areas where you feel that you would need a lot of expertise, of course, that would require your contacting a state LMI shop. And they would be available to help you design a research study, and also access, analyze, and interpret the results.

And those are pretty much my areas that I wanted to toss out in terms of suggestions, on where and how to research labor market trends.

**Michele Higgs-Johnson:** OK. That is a lot of information you've given us.

**Michelyn Burke-Lee:** I know, and I hope it's not too much.

**Michele Higgs-Johnson:** Now let me ask you just really quickly, with regard to the LMI shop, this is accessible – you can just go in and ask these questions? This is – or is there a Web site that we could give out for this?

**Michelyn Burke-Lee:** Actually, the shops are pretty much accessible. I would say your – the best way to access them originally would be now through the Web since everything is Web accessible. And I can provide an address that will get you to your state shops, and they can be accessed through [www.acinet.org](http://www.acinet.org). Now that is actually a page that goes through our Career One-Stop, but it does have links to the state LMI shops, which you will find on the state LMI shop pages are, you know, phone numbers, and contacts. So if the information that you're looking for is not there, feel free to give them a call, and they'll definitely work with you in terms of meeting your needs.

**Michele Higgs-Johnson:** And another question that's important with regard to this, is this a free service?

**Michelyn Burke-Lee:** For specialized studies, some of the ones that would require a lot of expertise, or statistical validity they may charge. But ideally, in terms of finding out like wages, benefits, projected upcoming industries, or occupations and demands, those should all be readily available and free information.

**Michele Higgs-Johnson:** OK. Got you. I'm just making a couple of notes here. Now going to another point that I did want to cover with you, what kind of information do you think that we'd want to hand out to the residents? What would we make available to them aside from, you know, going to the one shops – I'm sorry – the One-Stop centers to do job research and that kind of thing. What other information might we be able to make available for them?

**Michelyn Burke-Lee:** In terms of thinking about your actual residents, what I would do is basically customize the information. Look at the characteristics, the different graphics of your participants. And really, try to again to customize and bring in specific data sets that you know they would be interested in. Because there's a lot of information out there, and a lot of times, people who even know what they're looking for are very overwhelmed.

And so what I would suggest again is look at opportunities that are available in your area, or in the area where the residents are located. And again, look at reasonable opportunities. I mean it's nice to know about the biotech and the not now technology opportunities that are being created, but if it's not a good fit for your people, I mean it's good information, but again, try to provide the type of information that would be of use to them. For example, if you know a lot of your people are not high school graduates, or have just a high school diploma, concentrate on those jobs that just require that type of educational attainment. Again, I would not cut out a whole bunch of jobs that require a 4-year degree, because again, you're going to wind up creating – well you're going to wind up inadvertently discouraging a lot of folks. So, again, I think being

reasonable and realistic, in terms of the expectations of your clientele will help guide where to look for, and the type of labor market information that would be of use.

**Michele Higgs-Johnson:** I see. So basically don't create failure, by offering things that are unattainable.

**Michelyn Burke-Lee:** Right. And again, there's information out there for almost any program population if you're dealing with youth, if you're dealing with those who are recently incarcerated. There are all kinds of information, available, again, I'm just – I would just suggest strongly to be very aware of limiting or basically segmenting out that which is meaningful to avoid basically, again, overwhelming folks.

**Michele Higgs-Johnson:** OK. That sounds like a winner to me. Now is there a Web site that you can offer for this one?

**Michelyn Burke-Lee:** Actually, I would still suggest the ACINET site, because again, it's comprehensive information. It really starts at a national level, but you can drill down to the state level and through the state level, down to the local level. So again, that is one of the sites to go to. And when you are able to send out the link to the environmental scan, again, to access the scan, and look at the variety of sources that are accessible through that, because most of those are live links as well.

**Michele Higgs-Johnson:** I see, I got it. Well. I thank you. Would you have any further comments? Or shall we move on to Ms. Czarnecki.

**Michelyn Burke-Lee:** Good ahead, feel free. Thank you.

**Michele Higgs-Johnson:** You've worn yourself out, right? Ms. Czarnecki, are you ready to talk with us?

**Karen Czarnecki:** Yes, and I've got to tell you she's just eliminated 50 percent of what I was going to say, and that's a good thing for your listeners. You are very comprehensive Michelyn. And I'm going to actually piggy back a little bit of what you said, but I'm going to limit myself to four areas. I will give a few Internet resources, number one.

Number two; I'm going to talk about why a GED matters in terms of salary. Three, I will talk about job trends, and where the jobs are going to be. And fourth, I'll just talk a little bit about the One-Stops, and how they can help the soft skills training. OK.

First and foremost, ACINET that Michelyn just referred to as America's Career Info Net. And I've got a copy of it right here in front of me, or at least – it gives you occupational information for all of the differing occupations, what the wages are, and what the skills. It gives you industry information. What's a growing industry? What's a declining industry? And there is state information. You can click on your particular state and see what that labor market information is. It's a really, really, good resource. You've got people from all over the country on this call from what I understand. And as she said, it will help you drill down to what the needs are in your area, and where you should be looking. So it's [www.acinet.org](http://www.acinet.org).

**Michele Higgs-Johnson:** I'm going to jump in real quick and ask you too, to slow down. You don't have to rush.

**Karen Czarnecki:** Yes, I'm from Philadelphia I talk fast, OK.

**Michele Higgs-Johnson:** We want to get it all. Go ahead.

**Karen Czarnecki:** Yes, the second Web site is Career Voyages. It's [www.careervoyages.gov](http://www.careervoyages.gov).

And on that – all of these are funded by our Employment and Training Administration here at the Labor Department. Another fantastic Web site, the couple of things you'll find there is if you want to assess needs and skills, you can do that from that Web site. It talks about additional training. If you're looking for tools for career change, if somebody's changing careers, if they're 40- or 50-years old, and they want to go into the emerging occupations. You can find all of that information at that Web site. It's actually fairly good. I went to the skill search area; just to read off a couple of things that I found there when I went there.

It separates it out into, probably six or seven different skills – six skill areas. One is basic skill. And under that you can develop capacities that facilitate learning or more rapid acquisition of knowledge. In the example, active learning, understanding the implications of new information with the current and future problem solving and decision-making. These are all basic skills for a job. Active listening, so you can give full attention to what other people are saying, taking time to understand the points being made. Asking questions as appropriate. For example, you'd use that if you were in a customer service job. If you didn't do a very good job of listening to somebody and seeing what their concerns or their points were, you really couldn't solve their problem, you may not have a job for very long.

Critical thinking, using logic and reason to identify the strength and weaknesses of alternative solutions, conclusions, or approaches. There are certain positions that need somebody who's a critical thinker. But if you're not sure how to go about that process, you've never been exposed to it; these are some of the basic things. One is mathematics. Reading comprehension. Speaking and writing.

Separate area, resource management skills. You can develop capacities for managing financial resources, management of material resources, that's basically appropriate use of equipment facilities, materials needed to do a certain job. Office managers, often times would need those

types of skills. Personnel resources, motivating, developing and directing people as they work.

Another one they have there under that resource management skills, is time management; Social skills; everything from instructing individuals to negotiating with others; persuasive abilities.

A different area, technical skills, where you could figure what your – assess what your skills are, equipment maintenance, installation, operating controlling equipment or systems, programming, writing computer programs, repairing machines and systems or even troubleshooting, you know, what to do in those types of situations. And that's all that basic information there is on the Career Voyages, and the ACINet Web site.

**Michele Higgs-Johnson:** And that's [www.careervoyages.gov](http://www.careervoyages.gov).

**Karen Czarnecki:** Dot-gov, correct.

**Michele Higgs-Johnson:** OK. Got it.

**Karen Czarnecki:** A lot of really good information. And as you can see, everybody needs the Web these days. If you don't have the Web or access to Web, you can only go to the public library. And I have to underscore what Michelyn also said; I mean it's overwhelming. The information 10 years ago was very hard to find. You had to know who to go to. And most people did not want to walk into the unemployment offices to get this type of information. Now all you need to be able to do is have access to a computer and even if that means the public library where you get 30 minute blocks of time in most areas, and the research is there, as long as you know how to use the computer. So I guess using the computer really is first and foremost.

OK. We talked a little bit about Internet resources, second area, why a GED or a high school diploma matters.

Now I've got some interesting statistics here from the Department of Education, and again, you had to drill down into their Web site to find this stuff. Where did I put it? If I could find where I put it that would be even more helpful. Where it essentially says that people who have a high school diploma earn more than those who don't have a high school diploma. Here we go, earnings, I got this from the Census Bureau. For individuals who are 21 to 64 years old, if you are not a high school graduate, your median income, the average that those people make in America is \$21,332, so a little over \$21,000.

But the same group of people, again, it's a very wide age range, 21 to 64, for those who are high school graduates, their average earnings per year is \$27,351. I mean a huge difference \$21- to \$27,000. If you have some college typically an Associate's degree, your average earnings is \$31,998, so almost \$32,000 there. If you have a Bachelor's Degree, a four-year college degree, \$42,000 is your average earnings. You see, I mean the educational attainment; education really makes a difference at what your earnings are going to be.

Again, your residents are, you know, varying age ranges, so I'll just give just a little more statistics there. For the 21- to 24-year olds, the average earnings in America if you do not have a high school degree or a GED is \$16,000. If you have a high school degree, the average earnings is \$19,659. That's a difference.

**Michele Higgs-Johnson:** Huge.

**Karen Czarnecki:** It is a huge difference. For the 25 to 34 year olds, if you do not have a high school degree, your average earnings is \$20,000 a year, a little over \$20,000. If you have a high school degree, it's \$25,000. I'll just take it up a notch. If you have an Associate's Degree, which is a two-year college degree, your average earnings, if you're 25- to 34-years old is \$28,990, so almost \$29,000. Education makes a difference. Now those – that information is from the Census Bureau.

But in addition, there's a report put out here by our Policy Office at the Labor Department. And it basically says it's not – the payoffs with increased education are really beyond just what you're going to make in an annual salary. The greater your skills, and the greater your education, produce a greater likelihood, that the employee will receive a pension and health insurance with their job. So you're increasing – the more education, you're increasing the odds you're going to have a job with a pension, and some type of healthcare.

In addition, it also says that, you know, the more educational attainment you have, you also have greater employment security in the future. For example, unemployment rates are much, much lower for those who have higher rates of education, and this has been statistically proven over the past two decades. I'm not going to go into anymore, I mean there's tons of statistics I have here, but that's the basic thing. The more education you have, the better job, the longer you're going to have your job. And if you are unemployed the quicker you're going to be put back to work over somebody who has less educational, you know, less education. I think that's very, very significant.

**Michele Higgs-Johnson:** Extremely. I just want to remind everyone that even now, you can see that you're getting a tremendous amount of information. There's no way we can offer everything we need to in this time frame, but what you ladies have given us so far is just amazing. I mean the statistics that you've given us alone; they speak to the success story that I read earlier. You know, a gentleman had learned how to use the computer, and now he's going off to a 2 year college, and, you know, he's getting on his way. So this is phenomenal.

**Karen Czarnecki:** OK. I don't want to – I'll just talk a little bit about the job trends. I'll skip over the soft skills, other than to say...

**Michele Higgs-Johnson:** No. Don't skip over the soft skills.

**Karen Czarnecki:** But you guys want to have questions too.

**Michele Higgs-Johnson:** Absolutely. But those soft skills are important as well. We want to know, you know, what it takes to hold and keep a job, you know, to start and keep a job. And those things are important, even if it's just, you know, calling in and knowing that you have to call in if you're not going to make it to work. Those things are important. So if you can cover briefly that, as well.

**Karen Czarnecki:** OK. I'm going to talk about the jobs by occupation now. I've got – you can look at data, and look at it in any one certain way. And Michelyn gave you the bottom up perspective, and I'm giving you the top down, because I've always – I've mostly worked at the federal level, and then the state level, not really on the local level. But from my perch here and all of the national data I look at, the occupations that are growing the fastest, this does not mean the most jobs in America, but the occupations growing the fastest are medical assistants; network systems and data communications analysts, so people who work with computer systems; physician's assistant; social and human service assistants; home health aides; medical records and health information technicians, people who deal with the medical records all of the data; physical therapy aides; computer software engineers.

Now I've got, you know, a list of 25 here, and this all Bureau of Labor Statistic Information. I mean as you can see, a lot of these are in the IT field or in the healthcare field. That's where a majority of the jobs are going to be created in the future. Now those were the occupations. If you want to talk about the largest increases with all of the jobs that are going to be out there in the future, registered nurses; post secondary teachers; retail sales people; customer service reps; food preparation and service, including fast food; cashiers; janitors and cleaners, but that does not include maids and housekeeping cleaners, basically janitorial companies; general and operations managers; waitresses, waiters; nursing aides; truck drivers; receptionists and

information clerks and security guards. These are the largest increases in employment for the next – actually for the 2002 to 2012 period.

**Michele Higgs-Johnson:** Wow! I think that this is important information, as well. If you're looking at folks who are just getting into the job market, with low skills or, you know, not terribly sharp skills, and they're just getting in there, these jobs are entry into the labor market.

**Karen Czarnecki:** And the other thing you have to think about, I mean if healthcare has, out of the top 10 growing fields, healthcare is I think four of those top 10 areas, it might be hard to afford to go to a 4 year college to get a nursing degree. But it doesn't mean you can't start off as a nursing aid or a nursing assistant. There are – if you go to your local One-Stop center, and you want training in those areas, it's – I mean again, it's one of the areas that the Department of Labor is funding through the local Workforce Investment System. And there's a very good chance that people can sign up for a training program to get started on their way.

We believe in people getting more education, and more skills, so they can move up that career ladder. Often times, you will find that once you are in a field like that, you can join a special program that – we have started a series of pilot programs around the country, where we are partnering with major healthcare corporations, where they put up half the money, and we've put up half the money, and we're trying pilot programs in a lot of these areas, often times in conjunction with the local workforce and investment board, and the One-Stop career centers, to see if we can't have an accelerated path for individuals who really want to succeed, whether it's a nursing or the IT field.

There are 10 – I don't want to get too much into the weeds here, but there are 10 major fields that we're putting a lot of our money into employment training, and the majority of those are IT related, and they are healthcare related. Another one is advanced manufacturing for, and again, you need very specialized training for this, often times on the job, but you need a lot of math and

computer skills to be able to operate the heavy machinery. For example, if you take a look at a car today, we don't wind our windows down, there's a button you press, and there are a lot of electronics that go into every component of a car. And that's not basic manufacturing, anymore, that's considered advanced manufacturing. So you have to use computer systems so you know how to fix a lot of that electronic gadgetry that, you know, people just can't do on their own. I have a 20 something year old car, and I'm not one of these people from Texas that changes my oil in my own driveway. I just don't have those skills, but many of my friends do that. Cars today, the way they're configured, it's a lot harder to do a lot of your own maintenance of your cars. You have to send it to a shop. And there are a lot more – we're going to have a lot more jobs in those type of fields because everything is computerized these days. That's a little bit of the practical application of why all of this matters.

**Michele Higgs-Johnson:** Yes, I see. I want to ask really quickly, and then I think we do need to go on to questions, is there a Web site that you could supply us with for this additional information, for the fields that are going to be hot in the coming years, to go even deeper into that?

**Karen Czarnecki:** As a matter of fact, it's been made simple for you, because one of the ones I gave you earlier has those listed, and links to all of those different fields. Let me see, which is – Career Voyages. If you go to [careervoyages.gov](http://careervoyages.gov), it says if you're interested in one of the 10 industries and emerging fields we profile, you can learn more about these in demand occupations, and it gives you the 10 with links to those.

**Michelyn Burke-Lee:** Let me also note, that those are the ones that have been identified by the ETA nationally. But they also have identified different or emerging occupations in their areas as well, so also check the state Web sites.

**Michele Higgs-Johnson:** OK. Excellent. I don't want to cut you short. Are you – have you given as much as you can give?

**Karen Czarnecki:** I've always got more, but just on the soft skills, for anybody – now I speak to a lot of student groups when they come here to the Labor Department. They don't get to see the Secretary of Labor, they get to see me. And a lot of – I've seen a lot of those resumes too, and they're pretty bad. If anybody is right out of school, or if you haven't finished school, I mean if you're looking for everything from how to complete your GED, to what to wear on an interview. What do you do in your first job interview if you've never had whether you're 20 years old or 50 years old, you can walk into that One-Stop center, tell them at the info desk what you're looking for. There is – they'll meet just about everybody's needs. If you need help writing that resume, they'll help you do it. They'll sit you down with someone or show you examples or templates. If you need to learn how to use the computer, they'll do that too.

If you need to have access to a computer because you can't get online at your local library, I mean your residents should really see that as a resource, and not be afraid to ask any questions, because there are no dumb questions. You cannot help yourself and get into a decent job if you don't start asking these types of questions. And worst-case scenario, a group of five of them goes in, each having different need, one needs resume writing, and one needs to know how to dress for their first job that they've never had. Another one needs to know, you know, really some of the basics, how to show up and how to show up on time, and what's expected of them. You can get a lot of this basic training and even the soft skills through the One-Stop career centers.

**Michele Higgs-Johnson:** OK. This is great. That's helpful for them to know. Now I have one quick thing I'd like to mention, that we need to look at our residents first, and start off with a needs assessment, and find out what they need. Because the whole point of our being here is to help the residents to become self sufficient and strong, by helping them to gain and polish their skills.

I want to open the lines up for questions now. We have gotten a great deal of information. Matt, have we anyone in the queue?

**Operator:** And for our phone audience, if you do have a question or comment at this time, please press star one on your touch-tone telephone.

**Michele Higgs-Johnson:** I also want to thank you ladies for giving us so much information. Please stay on the line while we get questions.

**Operator:** Our first question will come from Alicia Richardson.

**Michele Higgs-Johnson:** Great, thank you. Hi, Alicia.

**Alicia Richardson:** Hello, how are you?

**Michele Higgs-Johnson:** Very well.

**Alicia Richardson:** I enjoyed the conference call. I just wanted to say that all of the things that the speakers were talking about, as a matter of fact, today, I contacted my local career center, and they sent four representatives out to discuss all of these things with our residents. And they really got a lot out of it, and were very excited. And, actually one of the ladies is motivated and inspired, and she will be going to the Department of Labor tomorrow, because they think they can place her.

**Karen Czarnecki:** Wonderful!

**Michelyn Burke-Lee:** Wonderful, that's great!

**Alicia Richardson:** So I mean all of those things, I mean I knew all of the things that you guys were discussing, I wasn't able to do them all by myself, so I called them, and they actually were like, well we'll come to you. So they actually came out and did a two-and-a-half hour job readiness workshop for our residents.

**Michelyn Burke-Lee:** Great! I love hearing stuff like that.

**Karen Czarnecki:** That's the way it's supposed to work.

**Michelyn Burke-Lee:** Yes, most definitely. Thank you.

**Alicia Richardson:** But thank you.

**Michele Higgs-Johnson:** That's an example of a partnership, which is one of the things that we try to promote is getting the two groups to come together, the labor market, and the – you know to come out to the site. Any other questions, Matt?

**Operator:** Yes, we'll go to Lancing Brandon.

**Lancing Brandon:** Hello?

**Michele Higgs-Johnson:** Hello.

**Lancing Brandon:** Hello.

**Michele Higgs-Johnson:** Yes.

**Lancing Brandon:** Hi.

**Michele Higgs-Johnson:** Hi, Brandon.

**Lancing Brandon:** Hi. I'm calling from Seattle. And I wanted to say first, that I really enjoyed the conference. And I wanted to ask is it Michelyn?

**Michelyn Burke-Lee:** Michelyn, but that's OK.

**Lancing Brandon:** Michelyn, about her link. You said something specific about a link that you had, that you actually put out. And I was curious to find out where that link was? Or is it on the...

**Michele Higgs-Johnson:** The Scan?

**Michelyn Burke-Lee:** Was that about the scan? It was a compilation of resources that we have pulled together here at ETA, is that what you were referring to?

**Lancing Brandon:** Right. Yes.

**Michelyn Burke-Lee:** Michele, is going to send it out after the call. I thought it was going to be sent out before hand so you could have kind of flipped through it a little bit, but it will be sent out after the call.

**Lancing Brandon:** Great, thanks.

**Michelyn Burke-Lee:** You're welcome.

**Michele Higgs-Johnson:** Matt, anyone else?

**Operator:** Not at this time. But I would like to remind everyone that it is star one on your touch-tone telephone if you do have a question or comment at this time.

**Michele Higgs-Johnson:** OK.

**Operator:** And we'll take a question from William Rowe.

**William Rowe:** Hello, everyone. I was just – I would like to say I enjoyed the conference call. And I'll be linking up to those sites there, because I really could use this information.

**Michele Higgs-Johnson:** Well this is terrific. Bill and I talked earlier today. We'll be sure to get you some information.

**Karen Czarnecki:** Could I throw out probably another resource? This is Karen. I was just thinking so many of you around the country, there are something called the Regional Executive Committees or Councils, there are a lot of them, too, they are a coordinated effort of all of the federal agencies in the different regions. I know there's one in Seattle. I know there's one in the San Francisco area. There's definitely one in Chicago. Some are more active than others. But often times, you will see different coalitions of the federal agencies, but through their regional structure, working together on collaborative programs.

And I throw that out there. I know if you do a Google search for the Regional Executive Committees, or Regional Executive Councils you'll be able to see them. I did that once, and I was kind of astonished to see how many there were. But, again, that's another resource. The One-Stop career center has a lot of different partners. The Education Department has a representative there. The Veterans Administration has a representative there. And the Vocational Education Individuals are usually represented in all of those One-Stop career centers.

But there are other federal agencies that have a significant presence and I know HUD has a significant presence around the country. And sometimes they come up with unique programs. So if nothing else, touching base with that Regional Executive Committee, or Council in your area, to let them know that you're there, and you'd like to work with them if they have any programs or conferences it might be a good option.

**Michele Higgs-Johnson:** This is good. Thank you very much. I wanted just to make one comment, when we listened to Alicia and the enthusiasm in her voice as she described what happened with the Labor Department there, that's called a success story. And we like to hear success stories, and we like to spread success stories. So I just want to remind Alicia that we may be in touch because we want to talk a little bit more about that. Matt, do we have any more questions?

**Operator:** Yes, we do. We'll go to Pamela Dodge next.

**Pamela Dodge:** Thank you. Ladies, do you have any sites that would offer information on internships that might be available to students, so they could perhaps get a taste of nursing or things along that line?

**Michelyn Burke-Lee:** Well I know with most federal agencies, in terms of available internships, you would have to go to the individual sites; I know it's particularly true for labor. I do know that education – the Department of Education Web site, does cover a variety of different types of opportunities like internships, and that would be a good site to basically explore. But I don't have a direct link to provide for you at this time for internships.

**Pamela Dodge:** OK. Is that typically just for federal type positions, and not local hospitals?

**Michelyn Burke-Lee:** No. Internships could really be created anywhere. It really kind of depends on how entrepreneurial and creative the person is. If they just want to get, just the experience, I mean you can always create an unpaid internship. Sometimes if there's someone interested in a particular industry, a lot of times, you can just go in and cold call, and basically create a position for you.

In terms of paid internships, again, those are going to be much harder to find. But a lot of times, it's just really creating lists of potential companies that might be interested, and just getting on the phone, or presenting yourself to the human resources area in that organization, and just basically talking to them about possible opportunities.

**Karen Czarnecki:** I second everything you said. Now my mother created an internship for me in a hospital when I was in high school. I didn't want to be a candy striper because I couldn't put the hours in. However, my mother called – she called the director of the hospital, whoever it was she knew or had met in her travels in life, and she said here's some free labor for you. My daughter will come in every Saturday for the next, you know, however many years I did it, and I could not be a candy striper because between my school activities and, you know, the school workload I had, I couldn't put in the number of hours. But my mother literally called them and said free help, and I worked in the gift shop. And it was probably one of the reasons I'm not in medicine right now, because of everything I saw and dealt with. But it was a fantastic learning experience when I was 16- or 17-years old.

You can do that. Michelyn mentioned earlier in the call about working with your local Chambers. If there's an industry – if you've got a group of residents who are interested in everything from nursing aides, whatever it might be, the local Chamber of Commerce, or even the Better Business Bureau has members. You could contact the head of it or whomever their community relations person is, tell them what you're interested in, and have them help you find these internships. That's one of the best ways to do it at the local level.

**Pamela Dodge:** I see. Thank you.

**Michelyn Burke-Lee:** That's a very good suggestion.

**Michele Higgs-Johnson:** Those are very good suggestions. Matt, have we anyone on queue?

**Operator:** Yes, we do. We'll take a follow up question from William Rowe.

**William Rowe:** Yes, I – because of the – I had one other question, and probably I missed this in other conference calls. Is there a site that you can log into to help residents in what we call skill training regarding any applications online, simulations, or any assessments – I did get some of the information on the assessments online, but like if they're going – you know a lot of the employers now are placing their applications, employment applications online. Any practice applications or things like that?

**Michelyn Burke-Lee:** There are a couple of sites that ETA has funded, and I think they've both been mentioned. One is part of our Career Info Net Site, and that's the [www.acinet.org](http://www.acinet.org). And if you click on the link there for Career Info Net, it does give you access to various tools, not necessarily applications, but various tools that, you know, can help build up different aspects of a résumé, or help you determine what type of résumé would be appropriate.

In terms of online résumés, my best suggestion there is to ensure that the résumé that's being created captures all of the key words that are...

**Karen Czarnecki:** Right.

**Michelyn Burke-Lee:** that are in whatever advertisement, whatever information that you got a hold of that made you aware of that opportunity. Because what they basically do is they scan the résumés in, and the computers are looking for certain words. And if you pretty much follow the job description or again, whatever the – what do I want to say, like the advertisement was, it increases your chances of getting hits, of getting positive hits and having your résumé standout.

**Karen Czarnecki:** I'll bet you if you went to the One-Stop center, they could assist them with that, even filling out one of these types of applications. It's true; there are key search words. And if you read any – you know, the Washington Post here, in the DC area has a – I think it's a weekly column on Sundays that talks about this, that a lot of people get filtered out, as they say. Whatever the ad asks for, if it's asking for somebody with, you know, 2-years proof reading skills you have to parrot back and give them the exact wording as to what was in that add for the search engine to find you. Because literally if there are 20 openings and they receive 1,000 applications, one HR director, Human Resource director is not going to be able to go through all of those. They will use as a first step this software, which is readily available to them now, and it's relatively inexpensive, too. It searches for the key phrases, key words or phrases that they put in their ads in the newspaper or online or however they advertise. So it's very, very important just to parrot back those exact words. They have to be true, of course, but if you have 2 years accounting experience, and they want 2 years accounting, you can put you've got 2 or 4, whatever it is, but use the same phrasing that they use in the ad.

You know, this is probably a good question for the Society of Human Resource Management local chapter, don't you think?

**Michele Higgs-Johnson:** Not a bad one. You guys are coming up with some great questions, as well.

**Michelyn Burke-Lee:** And also, just to kind of follow up on that, that also carries through for anyone that's trying to find a job electronically, you know, if you're going to post a résumé, you need to make sure it's chock full of whatever key words for that area that you want to secure. And just because you've just posted it like with America's Job Bank, or another electric job bank, just don't assume it's up there, it's out there, and I'm going to get hits. You're going to have to go back and follow up and see what type of results you're getting. You're going to have to tweak, and keep tweaking, and to make sure those words are there.

**Karen Czarnecki:** OK. Now my brother posted his résumé on that America's Job Bank. And the only – often times employers, this is something I found out a couple of months ago; employers will only look at résumés within the last 30-days. Even if you change a period, a comma, spacing, if somebody posts it, they shouldn't leave it there with no changes, because again, employers now have software that only looks for the most recent. And my brother, I don't know what he did, he changed his middle name or he put his middle name on his résumé, he ended up getting several phone calls, and he said my God, 6 months of leaving it there without touching it. And then all of a sudden I change it – I put my middle name on there, and because it came up as a new one or an edited one as opposed to an old one, I got several phone calls.

**Michelyn Burke-Lee:** Right. A lot of this really boils down to approach. It's really – it's kind of like a game. How are you going to approach it? And just identifying the tools and things you need to help you get through it.

**Michele Higgs-Johnson:** I think that's the magic right there. Anyone else, Matt?

**Operator:** Yes, we do have one final question in the question queue, and it will come – be a follow up from Pamela Dodge.

**Pamela Dodge:** Your last question, made me think of something else, are there any online aptitude tests that would help a person determined where their skills lie?

**Michelyn Burke-Lee:** I wouldn't necessarily say aptitude tests per se, but we do have what's called ONET, which is the Occupational Information Network, which also funded by ETA, and it does assess different interest, skill interests. I wouldn't necessarily call it an assessment test, because we're not licensed counselors – at least I'm not a licensed counselor, so I don't really want to go there.

But in terms of helping someone identify our current interest areas, and this is interest in terms of actual hard skills, soft skills, the type of work environment they would be interested in. ONET can help someone identify those different areas and where they would fit in that.

The Web site for ONET is, let me see here, it's [www.onetknowledge.com](http://www.onetknowledge.com)

**Michele Higgs-Johnson:** And remember everyone, there will be a transcript of this, so you'll see it again.

**Michelyn Burke-Lee:** And also, again, once you do get the link to the Scan, a lot of these things as you'll go through the Scan, you'll see that they'll be familiar, because they'll pick up a lot of the things that both Karen and I have mentioned.

**Sharon:** Pamela, I would like to add also that during our National Conference in June at Lake Buena Vista, there will be an unveiling by the Department of Labor of a One-Stop career coach, which will do those things, assess a resident's skills and qualifications. Or help them to determine where their qualifications and skills are, and move within the workforce. And even determine what jobs they should be looking for.

**Michele Higgs-Johnson:** Great! Thanks Sharon. Well have we come to the end, Matt? Is there anyone else?

**Operator:** There are no further questions.

**Michele Higgs-Johnson:** No further questions. Michelyn, Karen, thank you so much for your presentations this afternoon. The discussion has been tremendously helpful and extremely informative for our listeners, and just very positive, thank you so much. And further, as Sharon has mentioned, the Neighborhood Networks 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary meeting is coming up very quickly. It's June 29<sup>th</sup> through July 1<sup>st</sup>, in Lake Buena Vista, Florida. It will be a tremendous opportunity for you to share your experiences with your colleagues and celebrate the 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of this successful and effective program; we hope to see you there.

I thank you for joining us for this conversation today and remind you that our next conference call will take place on Tuesday, May 24<sup>th</sup>, at 3 p.m. on the topic of Center Classification: What's S.T.A.R.T. Got to do With It? We'll talk then about the Center Classification System which has been developed to establish minimum achievable standards for centers to ensure their effectiveness in delivering services, providing benchmarks for the components of the Neighborhood Networks program, of which S.T.A.R.T. is an integral part. Stay tuned everyone. Thanks again, and take good care. Thanks, ladies.

**Michelyn Burke-Lee:** Thank you.

**Karen Czarnecki:** All right, bye-bye.

**Operator:** And that does conclude today's teleconference. We'd like to thank everyone for their participation, and wish everyone a good day. And now at this time, you may disconnect.

**Links to information on workforce development:**

[www.bls.gov](http://www.bls.gov) -- the Bureau of Labor Statistics, for nationally-based labor market information, annual career guides, Occupational Outlook Handbook

[www.acinet.org](http://www.acinet.org) -- America's Career Info Net occupational information, wages, requisite skills, details about growing and declining industries; state and national information.

[www.careervoyages.gov](http://www.careervoyages.gov) -- to assess needs and skills, address needs of career changers, describes basic skills

[www.onetknowledgesite.gov](http://www.onetknowledgesite.gov) -- the Occupational Information Network assesses interests and skills, to help identify interest areas in terms of hard skills and soft skills, work environment match—to identify a “fit” between job seeker and job

[www.soar.gov](http://www.soar.gov) -- to identify job accommodations, for job seekers with health problems or disabilities

[www.ajb.org](http://www.ajb.org) -- America's Job Bank, job search engine; post a resume, create a cover letter, search job listings

[www.careeronestop.org](http://www.careeronestop.org) - Career One Stop; explore wages and occupational trends, locate potential employers, post resume, search job listings

[www.doleta.gov](http://www.doleta.gov) -- Department of Labor Employment and Training Administration; information on starting a career, building a career, worker's rights, dealing with job loss